A FAMILY AFFAIR.

By HUGH CONWAY.

Author; of "Called Back," and "Dark Days."

Her madness, if it may be called madness, deepened as the time passed by. After all, in spite of its claims to superiority, the mind is but the slave of the body. The yoke may be thrown aside for a while, but sooner or later its pressure becomes apparent. Fatigue and want of food were, with Sarah Miller, completing what distress had begun. Yet to herself it seemed that she had never seen things clearer, never reasoned never seen things clearer, never reasoned more cogently than at this moment when

her brain was taxed beyond endurance.

How would God net! Would He strike this man dead as he sat there! Would something frightful happen? Would the train be over turned? As this question exercised her, every jolt as the wheels passed the points sent a thrill through her and made her fancy the

moment was at band.

No. This could not be the appointed method. 31 reliess as her creek thingut her to believe the One to whom she prayed, sense of justice forbade her to suppose that many other lives must be sacrificed for the sake of destroying Maurice Hervey, must wait patiently and in faith, not anticipate God's purpose, growing very short! But the time was

Suddenly she turned and knelt on the floor of the carriage. She offered up a prayer that things might be made clear to her; that her agony of suspense might be brought to an end, Hervey watched her and laughed aloud.

"Quite right, Sarah," he said, "Never neglect your religious observances. I am



· Quite right, Sarah," he said. " Never neglect your religious observances."

afraid you can't pray yourself out of this situation; but there's no harm in trying.' The sound of his voice gave another and a

fresh turn to her thoughts. At that mo-ment her prayer was answered and everything grew clear. The clouds which trou-bled her rolled away, or it may be, closed round her to break no more. She shivered, and still kneeling, turned

her face to the speaker. Her look for a moment startled him in spite of the contempt he felt for her religious vagaries. And well it might tartle him.

Now she knew all. She knew why she had lived. She knew to what she was pre-destined. Cycles ago this moment had been decreed. It was she whom God had ap-pointed to remove this man from the path which led one of elect to happiness. The belief that ages and ages before she was born, her place, not only in this world, but also in the next, had been irrevocably fixed. the terrible conviction that she was one of the many doomed by God's will to eternal torture, a fate which not the prayers of a lifetime, or the conduct of a saint, could evert or in the slightest degree mitigate; this fearful belief closed round her like the wells of a prison from which there is no escape, from which death itself there is no release. How in such a state of mind could she turn with feelings of love and adoration to the Supreme Being Who had doomed her to such unutterable woo! No, she could fear Him, tremble before Him, abase herself at et, pray her wild hopeless prayers, but such love as she had to give was fain to bethe want of a better that object was Even as Jael, even as Judith, had their mis-

sion so had she, Sarah Miller, a mission equally terrible, that of slaving a man whom God had doomed. With her brain flooded, permeated by this one fearful thought, the woman rose from her knees and resumed

Everything, she fancied, with her mind bewildered in reality, yet to herself seem-ingly clear, pointed to the carrying out of this decree of destiny. The solitude, the night journey, even the man's half-helpless condition were but details of a settled scheme. The opportunity was here, only the way and the means were wanting. These in good time would be vouchsafed to her. She would be shown how she, a weak woman, was to take the life of a strong

Little did Maurice Hervey, as from the effects of fatigue, cigars and brandy he sat ment, dream what thoughts were passing through the mind of the woman near him. To him she was nothing more than an addle-headed sort of creature, who once upon a time had done a great deal towards bring-ing him to ruin; an act for which he rightly

believed he was now paying her in full. How was she to do it? Time was passing, and yet the path was not yet pointed out. See, the man's eyes were closed! Had the moment come! If she had a knife she might even now drive it into his heart! But she had no knife; had nothing which would serve her need, or rather Gol's need. Suddenly she remembered, as one remembers a dream, that hours and hours ago she had seen a fellow passenger opening a bag, and had noticed on the ton of that bag a pistol. Had she leen allowed to catch sight of the weapon for the purpose which she was deputed to carry out? If so, where was that pistol, and how could she get it into her hands? She rose, and without any settled object, passed Hervey and stepped out into

the gangway. Her movement awoke him. He put his head through the door and watched her as a cat watches a mouse. Sarah went the length of the long carriage, but found nothing to guide her to her end. Every door was hermetically sealed. It seemed as if she and her companion were the only per-sons awake. The only sound heard was the ceaseless rush of the train as it tore its way

on and on through the night. The woman returned and resumed her seat. The means had not yet been given her. A phantom of common sense also flitted through her mind. If she killed this man in such a manner it meant arrest and trial of herself. It meant shame and exposure to her loved mistress. No, she must a while. God had not yet speken word; not yet shown the exact way She placed him right in the track of the her will, insomuch that it struggled with wait yet a while. God had not yet spoken in which His work was to be done. Yet her

belief never swerved, never waverett:
Or not until she knew that the said of the long, dreary journey was close at hand; not until a kind of instinct told her that in a few short minutes Munich would be reached, Hervey, whom necessities had deprived of the means of telling the time, was still sleeping his wakeful and suspicious dog's sleep. Suddenly the long, shrill weistle sounded. The man started up, wide awake, and for the first time for hours a doubt as to her true reading of God's purpose flashed through Sarah Miller's brain. The time was so short. There was so much—so much to be done. The way was still in darkness.

Would the last few moment light it up? She clenched her hands convulsively, dig-ging the nails of one into the flesh of the other. She glanced once more at Hervey's face which, from his fatigue looked pale and She rose, and mechanically, like one in a dream, stepped out of the compartment into the dimly lighted gangway. Hervey followed her.

Without knowing why or wherefore, she walked the whole length of the carriage. In a dazed way she opened the door at the end and stepped out into the open air. Hervey followed her and the door closed behind them, and the man and the woman stood aione on the iron platform which lies between one carriage and its forerunger,

The train had not yet slackened speed, Its wild rush still whipped the naturally caim air into a flerce gale. The woman's dark bair, which had become untwisted, streamed behind her in elf locks. A tall black figure, with a white, a death-white face and Lurning eyes, staring fixedly at the destination to which the train was hurrying her, as fixedly as her mind was turned to the work which she yet believed she was doomed to execute.

The night was cloudy and moonless. Some ay ahead, a little to the right, the lights of the great city lit up the dark sky. It was on these lights that Sarah Miller's eyes were fixed, her lips the while muttering inaudible

For a few moments Hervey stood in silence by her side. Then he spoke, no good, Sarah, you can't give me the slip. Pil foliow you everywhere. He a sensible woman for once, and don't give me more

She spoke, but not in answer to his words. "That glare! that red glare!" she cried, in a thrilling voice. "Look at it! Look at it well! Do you know what it means to you

Before be could reply she answered bor own question. "It is the red giare of hell," she cried instill wikler accents, "The glare of the fire which burns for you and for me.

The shriek! Hear the shriek of the damned!" Once more the whistle sent its percing scream of warning far on the night air; and in another moment the strong brakes would have fallen on the great wheels. Hervey, really startled by his companion's wild bearg, turned to her savagely.
"Here, no nonsense!" he said roughly.

These were the last words he spoke. denly, and without the slightest warning, the woman threw herself upon him. Her arms classed him with the strength of frenzy. Her weight threw him off his balance. staggered backwards. He made one wild grab with his uninjured arm at the iron rail, ssed it, and most likely could not have held it had be caught it, then slipped down the three or four iron steps, and, with the woman's arms still holding him, the two fell with a fearful thud on to the six-foot way. His cry, if he had time to raise one, was lost in the rush of the train and the shrick of the steam-whistle. All was over in a secondthe train was speeding on, leaving behind it a dark mass lying between the up and the down lines. At the very last moment the way had been made clear to Sarah Miller. Even as she fell with her victim her one thought was of frenzied joy that she had found the means to do God's work.

For a minute or two after the last carriage of the train had swept by, that black mass lay motionless in the six-foot way. Then part of it began to show signs of life, Slowly and painfully the woman detached herself from her victim. She rose to her knew, and remained there staring fixedly at the white face that looked up to her own, Her frenzy for the moment had passed and she searcely knew what had happened or what she had done.
She was unburt. The man had struck the

ground first, and so borne the brunt of the shock His head had fallen heavily on the ballast of the line, and he lay without sense

or motion. Was he dead? This, when her disjointed and scattered thoughts were once more able to resume the terrible kaleidescopic pattern into which fanaticism bad shaken them, was the one question asked by the woman. She felt for question asked by the woman. She felt for the moment no remorse, no horror, but the dread seized her that her hand might have failed; that the work might not yet be done; that she had not fulfilled her destiny. bent over the prostrate man and placed her

Oheek close to his lips.

He breathed! She felt the faint breath
on her cheek! She laid her hand on his heart and f it its pulsations, slowly distinct. She sprang to her feet with a sharp cry of distress. She had failed! Hervey was alive and would recover. The work had not been

She peered wildly into the darkness. She soarcely knew for what she looked. A large stone, a piece of iron, anything which would show her that the hand which had guided her so far on the fearful road of fate not deserted her; but she found nothing, absolutely nothing which could serve her

But suddenly, away along the down line she saw a round red lighter eeping apparently nearer and nearer. Her heart leaped at the sight. To the uttermost bitterest end the way was clear. The final word had gone forth, the final revelation was made to her. She placed her hands under the man's shoulders, and by an effort of strength, desperate and far beyond what might have been expected from her frame, dragged him over the few feet of roadway which lay between him and the metals. He grouned once or twice, but remained senseless and motionless as she placed him right in the track of the coming train.



coming train.

The red light was close—close at hand, and overcame, not only the woman's physi-but the man lay still and recked nothing of cal fatigue, but also the craving for one it. The woman having accomplished her ghastly work, wound her black shawl ghastly work, wound her black shawl the pot. She tore berself away, and with tightly round her head, then fell upon her but once looking back forced her tired limbs knees, waited, and lived an age in every to bear her to a considerable distance. Here

She heard, through the muffling, the rush, she felt on her hands the wind of the metal monster as it swept by; but she heard or felt no more. She rose and shuddered con-vulsively; then, without a glance to see what her hand had wrought, stepped over the line, down the steep embankment, and was lost in the night. She had done what she believed to be her appointed task. No ger would Maurice Hervey stand be e. Beatrice and happiness!

The poor wretch was almost cut in two. The seels which had crushed the life out of him ere those of an engine on its way to pick or trucks on a siding some way down the The driver felt the slight obstruction, at having marked the spot where it ocrred, upon his return stopped the train i knew what had caused that momentary knew that a man's life had, in that

ond, mase laway. The body was picked up, piaced to a constalen to the Munich station, and there so the place appointed for the reception of the bodies of unknown men who meet with a sudden or violent death.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"I AM MAD." If by any chance Beatrice, who certainly had trouble enough to make her wakeful, had risen with the dawn of the morning which followed the tragely, and looked out of her casement she would have seen a sight which would have caused her much surprise. Here and there the shutters went down from She would have seen Sarah Miller, whom a shop, and at last the weary woman saw she believed to be in England, stanting on all but facing her a baker's window. She the opposite side of the street, utter despair and anguish written in every lineament, begged a glass of water. Not for 'er own gazing at her mistress' window like one bidding the object, the dearest on earth, an called upon to eat and drink. consoling hope of a meeting in some future strengthened again began her pilgrimage state is absent. But Beatrice, who, in the earlier watches of the night, had been awake reached the railway station. Here she asfor hours with her sorrow, slept on until the sun was high. Perhaps it was well for her the west would start.

as might be supposed, the agony of remorse. nearer and nearer. It was ag my at the thought of the further.

But in soile of all this she was able to sacrifice which such sense as still was bers take her sent in the train, able to exult that

what may be called the religious side of the question, her mind, as may be guessed from her deep, was gone past redemption. It may be that this had been her true state for years; ever since she had accepted as true the inexorable logic of creed which she had partly been taught, partly framed for here.

The tire may have been burning for look upon the spot where she had smell on the years; the convertion of the magnificent station, the woman veiled her face with her black she will in spite of her convection that she had but partly been taught, partly framed for here then. The work was limited, what did the future of the two matters out of the man left Munich, and as distanced out of the m life as well as reason.

She had killed, murdered this man in all der, fiercer and nearer. ever with her, she felt no poignant musery, no maddening regret. In her wild, diswhich, in order that prophecy might be ful-flied, singled him out, and decress that he should betray his Masser. And, if it be true that a providence saves and slays, who shall once brought the red light before them? say that the woman's mad reasoning was unsonndi

Miller was, as yet, same, or nearly so. She could look forward, plan, and even carry out. And the anguish which racked ter nind was the home-coming of the truth, incoherent dream. All she knew or cared to that her act must part her and her mis know was that she was speeding on to tress for ever. Here was the crowning Lendon. At last the sound of English sacrifice. Here was, perhaps, the earthly voices, the sight of English faces, told her punishment. Never again to gaze into that that she had reached the last stage of her dear face; never again to hear that loved voice; never again to be near her to minister and, if needs be, sin for her. Never to see her in the happiness which had been so dearly bought. Here was the sacrifice! It must be made, and she must find strength to make it, and skill to insure its being of use.

To see her mistress, to meet her even once

more would be to ruin all. She must never know whose hand it was bore her freedom. would never suspect that her servant had been the means of cutting the knot which it seemed no earthly power could undo. Ah, no earthly power could have undone it. So when at last the morning broke gray,

and trees and other objects loomed phantom like and unreal through the mist, Sarah Miller planned and schemed, seeking the way to insure what she had so dearly ought. All her thoughts reached one end, She must fly far, far from the spot. Beatrice must never hear of her again; never know that she left London. If her proximity to the dead man became known the truth might be guessed and all be lost.

Yet before she went she must see the house in which her darling lived. She must stoop and kiss the doorstep on which those loved feet had trodden. She must waft her one passionate and unbesied farewell, then leave the place and be as one dead. She struggled against the desire, but it

overcame her. With the first streaks of daylight she entered the sleeping city, and, utterly worn out, stood before her mistress window, and for a while watched it as one might watch the last fading ray of a sun which has sunk never again to rise, and lighten the darkness which shall be eternal, At that early bour of the moraing the street was silent and descried. There was no one to notice the strange looking creature who stood and, with wild despair eyes, for ever gazed on one spot. Her look for the time was such that no one, not even the one most preoccupied with his own con-cerns, could have passed her without feel ing his curiosity raised as to why she was lingering there, and what gave her that ap-

pearance of dire distress. After some minutes spent in this manner the woman crossed the road. Her limbs dragged after her and made her exhausted state apparent. She leant her head against the door of the house which held her mistress and sobbed convulsively. A dizzy feeling came over her, and she felt that she was ing came over her, and she felt that she was upon the point of fainting and falling senseless on the doorstep. By a supreme effort she roused herself and shook off the inciplent stupor. If once she sank down her weary limbs might rebel and refuse to do her bidding. She might lie there until her presence was discovered, and that her discovery ruined al!. No, if she were to sing and perhaps die, let it be as far away from Beatrice as her waning strength could carry her. Sweet as it would be to breathe her last within reach of her mistress, even such poor comfort could not be tress, even such poor comfort could not be vouchsaved to her,

cal fatigue, but also the craving for one glimpse of Beatrice which chained her to she found a qu'et doorstep on which she sat numolested, sat and fought against ber ex haustion, until such time as she would be



A dizzy feeling came over her. It was not long before, slowly, little by little, unit by unit, the city began to awake

certained at what time the next train for

she did so.

The poor self-appointed instrument for self in one corner of the waiting room and working the divine will had, after she left sat like a statue. But her brach was burnthe scene of her dark work, wandered about the outskirts of Munich, nimlessy and hopelesdy. Had it been broad daylight, and her ears; great wheels seemed turning and had there been persons to see her, an occasturning in her head; and if for a moment sional stifled mean and a wringing of the she dared to close her hot and weary eyes, hands would have been all that showed the she saw through the darkness a light, a agony of mind she endured. But it was not, flerce light, red like blood, and drawing

start new were such sense as said was best told her she must make, in order that the desired and predestined results might follow far; able to pray that her strength to hear her so sired and predestined results might follow far; able to pray that her strength to hear her so sired and predestined results might the act of the night.

She was mad and she was not mad. On Then all would be safe. No matter what what may be called the religious side of the | became of her then. The work was thusbed,

years giving now and again transient flashes, and only waiting for certain circumstances fore she removed the somiler covering from to fan it to a consuming flame. The fierce her white worn face. As the train hurried burst was now over, but the fire would burn on the wheels within her brain weirled and not again be hidden until it had devoured faster and faster, the rushing sound grew stronger, and the fierce red light shone red-

but cold blood. Apart from the horror at-ten iant on the actual execution of the crime, a horror which began to haunt her and be speech as was necessary to procure the food and drink which nature absolutely demanded, the woman spoke no word during that jointed was she immented, not the man's long journey back. Except that now and death, but the fact that she had been chosen again she pressed them to her brow, in a to bring it about. She lamented it even as vain endeavor to stop the wheels which Judas might have immented the hard fate whirled in her brain, her thin hands were

For all she knew, that journey might have lasted months or years. Periods of time On the other side, the material side, Sarah meant nothing to her now. Eternity, not

journey. Then she roused herself and made ber final preparations.

She searched her pocket, and tore into small bits every piece of paper it contained, so that no written word could be left to give clew to her identity. Last of all she drew from an envelope a photograph of Beatrice. She gazed at it long and passion-ately, and then, with a deep sigh, tore it across and across, and threw the pieces to the winds. She dared not even keep this poor relic of her darling.

London at last! Sarah Miller stepped from the train, and once more stood on the platform which she had quitted rather more than three days before. It was now past 8 o'clock in the morning. Whither should she turn. She stood hesitating and bewil-

There was one thing more which she had settled to do. What was it! Oh, those wheels, those wheels, will they never stop! She pressed her fingers to her temples, and strove to recall what resolution had slipped from her mind.

Ah, now she remembered what it was Her money, she must get rid of that. She had no further need of money, now that she had reached the final goal. In her pocket were both German and English coins. She collected them, and creeping stealthily to the box which stands awaiting contributions for some, doubtless, very deserving charity, she dropped in every coin that was upon her person. This done, she believed there was person. nothing left which could in any way show who she was or whence she came.

She passed out under the archway, a soli-tary, dark robed figure with a head beut as in grief. She passed from the gastly white glare of electric lamps into the all but deserted Strand. She walked some way up the Strand, then, without any definite aim, turned to the right and by and by found herself on the embankment.

Still she wandered on until she reached Waterloo bridge. She went half way across it, then stopped short and gazed ovparapet into the river. But no thought of self-destruction had entered into her head, although the red light was still before her eyes, the wild rush still sounding in her ears. and those fearful iron wheels in her brain circling more rapidly than ever. No, the smooth, calm, peaceful stream has for al who are in deep distress. So she looked and looked; even craned over the parapet to peer into its somber, placid depths.

At that moment a blinding light flashed upon her eyes and a hand grasped her shoulder. "Now none of the nonsense," said a sharp voice—the voice o. a policeman who had seen her dark form against the stonework of the bridge. The woman turned her face to his, and the auguish written upon it persuaded the constable that he had arrived just in the nick of time.

"River air's bad at night for such as you," he said in a kinder voice, "Now you go straight home like a good woman. I'll see you safe off the bridge. You can go from which end you like, but if you stay here any longer, well. I must run vou in.

She clasped her hands. "I am mad?" she cried in piteous, imploring tones. "Can't you see I am mad! Take me and put me where mad people are sent to."

Strange as a confession of insanity seemed. the puzzled policeman was bound to take her at her word, the more so because she would not or could not give any account of herself. or name any place of residence. So she was led away a docile captive, and spent the rest of the night, or rather morning, under

detention. Mad or not, she believed her work was now done; believed that she would be benow done; believed that she would never find stowed where her mistress would never find her, never hear of her. Mad or not, her one concentrated aim was to keep the secret of the way in which Maurice Hervey diel. If mad, the poor wretch's cunning had all but

supplied the place of reason.

All but, for as usual it had forgotten one important thing. Unless Beatrice was in-formed of her husband's death, unless that death were proved beyond a doubt, Sarah Miller's crime would be useless and her sacrifice futile.

(TO BE CONTINUED).

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